

# Independent

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Vol. XIV No. 187 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Wednesday August 14, 2024, Safar 08, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

## Attempts to weaken army tantamount to undermine country, says COAS

Gen Asim Munir says armed forces will not let sacrifices of their martyrs go in vain; Says Pakistan's future is bright and secure, our forces will continue to defend it with unwavering resolve

### Monitoring Desk

RAWALPINDI: Army Chief General Asim Munir has stated weakening the armed forces is tantamount to weakening the country, pledging that the military will not allow let its sacrifices go in vain.

He stated this while addressing the Azadi Parade at Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) in Kakul on the eve of Independence Day late Tuesday.

The parade was held at Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul to mark the 78th Independence Day.

"Pakistan came into

being to stand out among the comity of nations. Pakistan is a fait accompli and it cannot be undone," the army chief stated.

Gen Munir said the country's people "are living as a free nation owing to the martyrs' sacrifices".

"We emerge as a strong nation after trial and tribulations. To weaken Pakistan's armed forces is tantamount to weakening the country itself."

The army chief said armed forces will not let sacrifices of their martyrs go to waste.

"Unfortunately the

forces who have evil designs of extremism and extremism have surfaced in our country."

Gen Munir said that the base of our national consciousness is the ideology of Pakistan, which stands on the two-nation theory.

"May the Almighty Allah grant us the courage and strength to defend the country and make it a successful and great example for future generations."

The army chief said that the two-nation theory provided an opportunity to the Muslims of the sub-

continent to have separate identity, culture and civilization.

The army chief was the chief guest of the Azadi Parade ceremony.

The cadets of the Pakistan Military Academy presented a spectacular demonstration of their skills in the drill parade.

On this occasion, a special tribute was presented to the martyrs of the land.

The event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by a laser light show depicting Pakistan's struggle for

independence and nation-building. The cadets performed a march-past, and a flag-hoisting ceremony was held at midnight, where the national anthem was sung. The national flag was hoisted by the 12th Baloch Regiment at midnight, and attendees stood to sing the national anthem. The event was attended by cadets, their families, and other distinguished guests, who praised the cadets for their disciplined march-past. The troops reaffirmed their commitment to making every sacrifice for the nation.



RAWALPINDI: Army Chief General Asim Munir addressing Azadi Parade at PMA Kakul

General Munir expressed gratitude for the blessings of freedom and the establishment of Pakistan, acknowledging the

sacrifices made by the forefathers and paying tribute to the heroes of the independence movement. He also highlighted the impor-

ance of unity, warning that discord and division could hollow the nation from within, paving the way for external aggression.



## PM announces cash price of Rs. 150m for Arshad Nadeem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday announced a cash award of Rs150 million (15 crore) to Olympian and gold medalist Arshad Nadeem besides, a number of other initiatives to recognize his historic feat in javelin throw competition of Paris Olympics 2024.

Addressing a special ceremony held at the PM Office and televised on TV channels, the prime minister said that the road between F-9 and F-10 sectors of Islamabad would be renamed as 'Arshad Nadeem road', besides Arshad Nadeem High Performance Academy would be established at Jinnah Stadium to groom the young talent for

the upcoming 2028 Olympics.

The prime minister announced establishment of Pakistan Sports Endowment Fund with Rs1 billion to support the players whereas a committee would be set up to give recommendations for the promotion of sports in the country.

On the occasion, the prime minister also announced an award of Rs10 million (1 crore) for Salman Iqbal Butt, Arshad's coach.

He said that he had also recommended conferment of Hilal-i-Imtiaz award upon Arshad Nadeem.

The prime minister said that it was a moment of immense pride to host nation's hero Arshad Nadeem who had won the gold medal in Paris Olymp-

pics after a gap of 40 years, on the basis of his hard work.

The entire nation thanked him as his success had doubled the celebrations of the Independence Day, he said, adding Arshad Nadeem, with his javelin throw, had also set a new Olympics record.

The prime minister opined that his achievement had set the morale of entire nation very high and gave a message that one should not be bogged down before problems and challenges but face them with courage and determination.

"The precedent you set in Paris is a beacon for us all. Your success came at a time when the preparations for the Independence Day are in full swing.



LONDON: Federal Minister for Interior Mohnsin Naqvi shaking hands with British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper in London.

## Bilawal reaffirms PPP dedication to uphold principles of democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reaffirmed his party's dedication to upholding the core principles of democracy, constitutionalism, and equality on which Pakistan was founded.

In a message on the occasion of 77th Independence Day, he emphasized that the 1973 Constitution embodies the spirit of the Freedom Movement and provides a unified vision for the nation's future.

Bilawal Bhutto reiterated the PPP's commitment to advancing the nation's progress and unity by strengthening democracy in line with the vision of Pakistan's founding fathers.

"As we celebrate Independence Day, we honor the sacrifices made by our forefathers who fought for our freedom and sovereignty. Today is a day to

reflect on the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his democratic ideals. It is also a day to confront our challenges and learn from our past. Despite being founded by a leader who championed constitutionalism and democracy, our nation has faced periods of autocratic rule that undermined basic freedoms and rights."

Bilawal Bhutto emphasized that the PPP remains committed to the principles and vision of the founding fathers.

He remarked, "The ideology of Quaid-e-Azam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the philosophy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto serve as guiding lights for us. Under President Asif Ali Zardari's vision of reconciliation and national unity, we find hope and strength to navigate our challenges."

## Interior Minister calls on British Counterpart

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Mohnsin Naqvi called on British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper during his visit to the United Kingdom. The Minister congratulated Yvette Cooper on assuming the office of British Home Secretary and expressed good wishes for her.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including legal assistance in criminal cases, effective border management, and measures to curb illegal immigration were discussed. The training of Pakistani police officers in the UK was also discussed. The Minister welcomed the British cooperation in this regard and expressed his pleasure that Pakistani police officers would receive regular training in the UK. He emphasized the need to enhance mutual cooperation to tackle illegal immigration.

## President strongly condemns attack on Panjgur DC

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday strongly condemned the attack on the Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur Zakir Baloch in the Mastung district of Balochistan. The president expressed his deep grief over the martyrdom of the deputy commissioner in the attack. Conveying condolence to the bereaved family of Zakir Baloch, he prayed to Allah Almighty to grant them strength to bear the loss and also for the deceased's soul's ranks in paradise.

## Envoys of Vietnam, Maldives, Ireland present credentials to President

ISLAMABAD (APP): The envoys of Vietnam, Maldives and Ireland presented their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, during a credential ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday.

The President received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Vietnam, Pham Anh Tuan, High Commissioner-designate of Maldives, Uz Mohamed Toha, and Ambassador-designate of Ireland, Ms Mary O'Neil, who also held separate meetings with the President.

Welcoming the envoys, the president felicitated them on their appointment and expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually beneficial co-

operation with Pakistan.

The president said that Pakistan wanted to further solidify trade, economic and investment relations with friendly countries in all areas of mutual interest. He remarked that Pakistan was focused on boosting bilateral trade volume with all friendly countries. He stated that Pakistan offered great investment opportunities in diverse fields and businesses should invest in agriculture, energy, infrastructure, manufacturing, information technology, mining, and green technologies sectors.

Earlier, the envoys were presented guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces upon their arrival at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Pakistan expresses grave concern over recurrent theft of radioactive materials in India

ISLAMABAD (Online): In response to a question about Pakistan's reaction to the arrest of a gang in India with radioactive material, the Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stated the following:

"Pakistan is gravely concerned at the reports of recurring incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in India.

In the latest incident, a gang of individuals were found in illegal possession of a highly radioactive and toxic substance Californium, worth US\$ 100 million in quantity. Three incidents of theft of Californium were also reported in 2021.

Last month, five indi-

viduals with a radioactive device reportedly stolen from Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC) were also found from Dehradun.

These recurring incidents call into question the measures taken by New Delhi for the safety and security of nuclear and other radioactive material.

These incidents also suggest the existence of a black market for sensitive, dual use materials inside India.

The international community seeks an earnest disclosure from the Indian authorities as to how a sealed Radioactive Source (SRS) material, like Californium, was in the possession of the apprehended individuals.

## PN Command & Staff Conference reviews regional maritime situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Command and Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy concluded here on Tuesday at Naval Headquarters chaired by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf that reviewed maritime situation in North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden and deliberated on measures for safety and security of national sea trade passing through the region.

During the conference, matters related to geo strategic milieu, national security, operational preparedness, training and welfare of troops were reviewed.

Comprehensive briefing on important on-going and future developmental projects of Pakistan Navy was also given to Chief of the Naval Staff, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Naval Chief expressed confidence over combat readiness and significant contribution of the Navy in maritime domain. Chief of the Naval Staff emphasized on strengthening maritime security and maintaining combat readiness so as to effectively respond to any aggression against Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf chairing command and staff conference of Pakistan Navy.

## PM Shehbaz reaffirms commitment to building a strong, prosperous Pakistan

Cabinet approves enhancement in Privatization Commission Board members' strength

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reaffirmed his strong commitment to transform Pakistan into a prosperous and robust nation through the collective efforts of all segments of society, working together as a united team.

In his opening remarks at the federal cabinet meeting, he expressed his deep belief that teamwork is essential for achieving success.

He emphasized the importance of learning from past mistakes and moving forward with relentless day-and-night efforts to build the nation envisioned

by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

This year on Independence Day, he said, the entire nation will reaffirm its commitment to work tirelessly for the country's progress.

Paying high tribute to Olympian javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem, he said that Nadeem's hard work and dedication have added even more significance to the Independence Day celebrations.

Despite numerous challenges, Arshad excelled through his unwavering effort. His success was also a testament to the support of his parents and coach, which helped him secure

the gold medal.

He said Arshad has emerged as a symbol of unity and national pride and announced that he has recommended the nation's highest honors be awarded to Arshad Nadeem in recognition of his hard work and service to the country.

He also mentioned that he has invited Arshad and his family to the prime minister's residence in Islamabad for dinner today, as a gesture of appreciation from both the government and the entire nation.

He praised the power minister, his team, and other cabinet members for their efforts to make electricity more affordable.



ISLAMABAD: The envoys of Vietnam, Maldives, and Ireland presenting their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Ahsan vows to revive dev. trajectory, include Pak in top-10 economies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday renewed his commitment to place the country on a national growth trajectory and include it among the world's top ten economies.

"We will once again turn the wheel of the economy and give the youth a Pakistan that will be among the top ten economies of the world by 2047," he said, promising a future where the country's youth would inherit a thriving and prosperous state.

The minister expressed this resolve while addressing the Istehkam-e-Pakistan seminar organized by the Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI) in connection with the 78th Independence Day. He highlighted the crucial role of peace, political stability, consistent policies and continuous reforms in achieving national development and prosperity.

## Govt slashes petrol price by Rs8.47 per litre

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: In a relief for the masses reeling under the skyrocketing inflation, the government has reduced the petrol price by Rs8.47 per litre.

A notification in this regard has also been issued by the finance ministry in which the diesel price also reduced by Rs6.07 per litre.

The decision comes mainly due to a drop in fuel prices in the global market.

The new price of the petrol stands at Rs260.96 per litre while that of diesel, it is Rs266.07 per litre.

The fuel price cut comes as a major relief for the masses on the occasion of Independence Day, as the country gears up for the celebration of 77 years of independence today (August 14).

## Visa fee for 126 countries waived under new visa policy: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday announced launch of a new visa policy under which visa fee for the nationals of 126 countries would be waived to boost tourism and attract foreign investment in the country. Addressing a news conference, the minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would launch the new visa policy tonight which would allow 126 countries' residents to visit Pakistan in hassle-free manner. The new visa policy which is aimed at simplifying the visa process would come into effect tonight, he added.

According to him, the nationals of these countries would get their visas within 10 minutes after filling an online form which had only 30 questions. The visa would be valid for 3 months and could be renewed in no time, he added.

The minister said the residents of gulf countries would get visa on arrival, while pilgrims would also be facilitated in this regard to boost the religious tourism in the country. The beauty and infrastructural development of Pakistan stunned the foreign tourists who left the country with sweet memories, he said, urging them to visit Pakistan which has been opened its doors to the world including travelers, businessmen and investors.

He said Pakistan had vast tourism potential and the government wanted the foreigners to witness the beauty of Pakistan which is endowed with stunning green valleys, famous deserts, beautiful oceans and mesmerizing landscapes.

To a query, he said all provincial governments and the secretary interior were informed that dedicated desks would be established to welcome tourists at the airports. All the stakeholders were taken on the board to ensure safety and security of tourists in the country, he added.



Daily Voice of Masses Independent

School massacre in Gaza

Early on Saturday morning, Israel struck a school sheltering around 2,400 displaced Palestinians in Gaza City. At least 100 people have been reported killed in this atrocity. The accounts given by eyewitnesses are horrifying; many of the bodies were charred and dismembered.

When TTP terrorists struck the APS in Peshawar a decade ago, there was worldwide revulsion at the fact that the militants had slaughtered over 140 people, primarily minors. While that tragedy has not been forgotten by Pakistan, Israel has been unleashing similarly monstrous violence upon Gaza's civilians since last October.

Throughout this one-sided conflict — perhaps better described as a genocidal campaign — Tel Aviv has hardly batted an eyelid as it hit schools, hospitals and people queuing for food, all in the name of targeting Hamas. Even after the latest tragedy, Israel said it had hit "Hamas terrorists and commanders". Does this justify the burning alive and dismemberment of countless non-combatants, including children, in the process? Clearly, in Israel's twisted worldview, it does.

Can Tel Aviv's assertions that it is ready to discuss a ceasefire really be taken seriously in the aftermath of such bloodbaths? The US, Qatar and Egypt have recently called for resuming truce talks. But it appears that Israel is only playing for time, and is not serious about peace, or else it would not slaughter 100 people after agreeing to attend the talks. The fact is that the longer the slaughter in Gaza continues, the longer Benjamin Netanyahu can cling to power. Perhaps this is a reason why the Israeli prime minister is determined to set the Middle East on fire by provoking Iran and its armed regional allies. If a bigger conflagration ensues, Mr Netanyahu can claim he is defending his country from "evil" Iran, and most of his Western friends may lap it up.

There are considerable chances of the war expanding. Iranian and Israeli and US officials have been exchanging combative rhetoric; it is perhaps only a matter of time before these verbal attacks turn into an actual confrontation. The US has reportedly asked one of its carrier strike groups to speed up its arrival in the Middle East, while its defence secretary has been regularly exchanging notes with the Israeli defence minister. None of this bodes well for the region, or for the larger international community. Clearly, the West is unwilling to rein in Israel. On Monday, the UK, Germany and France called upon Iran not to "escalate". Perhaps they would be better off advising Tel Aviv to stop murdering civilians in Gaza, and end the campaign of assassinations in Iran, Lebanon and Syria. Unless Israel is muzzled, there will be no peace in the Middle East, and the chances of escalation will gather pace.

Australia's recipe

Mohammad Ali Babakhel

With more than 100 different faiths and over 300 languages, Australia is one of the world's most culturally and linguistically diverse nations. Promoting social cohesion is a big challenge for it, but Australia has enjoyed a peaceful history, relatively free from violent extremism. Still, the threat of VE is not non-existent, and it threatens Australia's core values of respect for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, equal opportunity, and freedom.

In Australia, VE refers to the beliefs and actions of individuals who use violence or support the use of violence to achieve ideological, religious, or political goals. It includes terrorism and other forms of politically motivated and communal violence that seek to bring about change through fear and intimidation.

Radicalisation is a complex process that involves a person's beliefs shifting from relatively conventional to radical, with a desire for a drastic societal change. According to the Australian belief, when a person radicalises, the community and government are responsible for acting and intervening to prevent harm to both the person and wider society.

In Australia, new migrants with low income and high unemployment rates are often vulnerable to extremist narratives. New migrants for whom English is a second language are uncertain about navigating systems in a new country and may feel isolated. Those with low education levels also have low awareness of their rights and may feel voiceless, marginalised, and susceptible to VE. Feelings of helplessness may

drive them to amplify their voices online, further exposing them to extremist influences. This is why reducing access to extremist material and empowering communities to combat terrorist narratives are among Australia's priorities.

After 9/11, Australia enacted various laws to prevent acts of VE. In the past, the Australian authorities had to wait until a terrorist attack was imminent or underway before they could intervene. The updated Australian legal framework allows them to disrupt acts of VE while they are still being planned.

The Australian approach to CVE (countering violent extremism) comprises robust security, strong law enforcement, effective community engagement, and extensive partnerships. Australia invests considerable resources in community engagement and building social harmony. Key areas of focus include supporting individuals' participation in education, improving social and economic participation, increasing community harmony, preventing crime, and building effective families and community organisations.

Australia's recipe for CVE is based on the belief that unity of effort works, partnerships matter, and teamwork makes everything possible. Australia's approach acknowledges that the threat is persistent and dynamic; hence, it never remains static. Since the world is rapidly changing, threats are also continuously evolving. The causes of VE can be better understood, mitigated, and reduced through collaborative partnerships. Australia also recognises the engagement of the private sector and civil society as essential. That's why, to counter VE, Australia has worked

collaboratively and quietly at the global, regional, and bilateral levels.

In the 2002 Bali bombings, 202 people, including 88 Australians, were killed, representing the single most significant loss of Australian life due to terrorism. Afterwards, Australia started a CVE collaboration with Indonesia and other countries. Australia is also part of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, which was formed in 2014.

The Australian strategy includes six principles: lives must be protected; the government and the community must tackle terrorism together; terrorist acts should be prosecuted through the criminal justice system; international partnerships should be built; community and national resilience should be strengthened; and Australia's counterterrorism (CT) arrangements should reflect the changing threat environment. Its approach is based on four complementary streams of activity, which seek to build strength in diversity and social participation, work with vulnerable communities and institutions, address online terrorist propaganda, and support deradicalisation. Since 2003, the appointment of an ambassador for CT to deal with terrorism-related issues speaks of Australia's commitment to CT. This ambassador coordinates Australia's international CT efforts by building international linkages, leading diplomatic efforts in the domain of CT with partner countries, and facilitating Australia in benefiting from global best practices. Pakistan must evaluate the need for such a diplomatic position, which may benefit it and friendly countries equally. -- Courtesy Dawn

Saving lives

Naseem Salahuddin

Sanitation and immunisation stand as the most effective defences against disease, disability, and death caused by infectious diseases. As our population reels from public health diseases, neither individuals nor the government observe the basic principles of hygiene and sanitation. Overpopulation exacerbates these issues, straining civic resources and impacting public health.

Babies born to undernourished mothers are destined to die from preventable diseases even before they reach toddler age. Although early childhood vaccinations are offered free through the government's Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI), their acceptance is inconsistent. Adults, too, are vulnerable to viruses or bacteria that can be prevented through vaccination.

Immunisation induces immunity against specific diseases. The selected bacteria or virus is modified, scientifically processed, and injected. It mimics the original disease, albeit mildly, and provokes the host immune system to produce antibodies that counter the infectious agent without causing the disease.

The history of vaccination began with smallpox. Older readers may remember the consequences of smallpox that killed, blinded, or disfigured millions everywhere. Medical history is replete with tales of this highly contagious disease that continued for centuries. In England, Edward Jenner's ground-breaking experiment in 1796 involved using fluid from eruptions on the hands of a milkmaid who milked the udder of a cow that had pustules. He injected the fluid into an incision on the arm of a healthy

boy and observed that his subject remained protected. He used his innovation in his native town, stemming the spread of smallpox.

The Latin word for cow is 'vacca', and cowpox is 'vaccinia'; Jenner called this procedure vaccination. The process was subsequently refined and became mandatory globally. The last naturally occurring smallpox case was reported in Somalia in 1977. Routine smallpox vaccination ceased worldwide in 1980. Smallpox is the only ID to have been eradicated and is among the most remarkable of public health successes.

Efforts expanded to combat other IDs. Universal immunisation against Hepatitis B has saved millions from liver failure and liver cancer. Life-saving vaccines are available today against viral influenza, bacterial pneumonia, meningitis, tetanus, typhoid, and cholera. Shingles, caused by the herpes zoster virus, is reactivated chickenpox virus acquired in childhood. The reawakened virus often causes relentless pain but can be prevented with the shingles vaccines. The Human Papillomavirus (which causes cervical cancer in women) is preventable with shots given during adolescence.

Childhood infections such as measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, diphtheria, and tetanus are vaccine-preventable. Polio, which killed or maimed thousands of children globally, has virtually ended through mass vaccination, with ongoing challenges in a few places including Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Covid-19 pandemic was met with swift vaccine development, illustrating the critical role vaccines play in combating global health crises. Encouraging results from

field trials of vaccines against malaria, dengue, and TB are in the development or testing phases. However, not all IDs are vaccine-preventable. While they are playing havoc globally, Hepatitis C and HIV elude attempts at vaccine production.

Modern vaccines are safe and generally effective, although some people may express side effects, like a slight fever or rash. An intriguing feature of the human immune system is the presence of 'memory cells'. Even years later, a booster shot will awaken resting cells and enhance protection. The evidence of res-p-onse is the detection of measurable antibodies in the blood, but many such tests are not commercially available. Data on the efficacy of a vaccine is credible only if obtained through well-conducted human trials, validated, and published in reputable journals.

If at least two-thirds of a population is vaccinated during an outbreak, it will create a shield that will protect those who are not. Travellers heading to areas where a disease is endemic are advised to receive vaccinations. Pilgrims to Haj and Umrah are vulnerable to meningitis, influenza, or pneumonia and must receive these preventive shots.

Almost all vaccines in Pakistan are imported and hence expensive and erratically available, depending on their demand and import policies. Ironically, EPI vaccines for children are supported through international funding agencies, yet they are inadequately used. Vaccines for specific infections must be prioritised but must not replace water, sanitation and hygiene. This is the responsibility of individuals and our municipalities. -- Courtesy Dawn

International News

Israel-Hamas war latest: Iran rejects European leaders' call to refrain from any retaliatory attacks

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Iran rejected a call Tuesday by three European countries urging it to refrain from any retaliatory attacks that would further escalate regional tensions. Iran calls it an "excessive request."

The leaders of Britain, France and Germany in a joint statement Monday asked Iran and its allies to refrain from retaliation for the killing of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran last month. Iran has blamed Israel.

The European leaders also endorsed the latest push by mediators Qatar, Egypt and the United States to broker an agreement to end the Israel-Hamas war. Talks are expected to resume Thursday. And they called for the return of scores of hostages held by Hamas and the "unfettered" delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Mediators have spent months trying to get the

sides to agree to a three-phase plan in which Hamas would release the remaining hostages captured in its Oct. 7 attack in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, and Israel would withdraw from Gaza.

After more than 10 months of fighting, the Palestinian death toll is nearing 40,000 in Gaza, according to the Health Ministry there. Israel's military says Palestinian militants have fired two rockets from the Gaza Strip and one of them landed in the sea off central Israel. It says the other projectile did not cross into Israeli territory.

Hamas' armed wing said it fired two rockets at Tel Aviv, located on the coast in central Israel.

Palestinian rocket fire has dramatically quieted during Israel's 10-month offensive in Gaza, which was launched in response to Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into Israel. The last rocket attack on Tel Aviv was on

May 26. Militants still launch sporadic rocket and mortar attacks near the border, but nearly all the projectiles are intercepted or fall in open spaces without causing casualties or damage.

More than 200 prisoners are evacuated in Lebanon amid concerns about wider war Lebanese authorities have evacuated prisoners from police stations in Beirut's southern suburbs and southern Lebanon to other parts of the country out of concerns about possible war with Israel, judicial and security officials say. The officials say about 220 prisoners were moved. It comes amid concerns that the ongoing exchange of cross-border fire between Israeli troops and members of the Lebanon-based militant Hezbollah group might expand after Israel killed a top Hezbollah official last month. Hezbollah has vowed to retaliate.

US says it had no role in ousting of Bangladesh's Hasina

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: The United States had no role in ousting Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who recently quit her position and fled the South Asian nation, the White House said on Monday, calling allegations of US interference "simply false." "We have had no involvement at all. Any reports or rumors that the United States government was involved in these events is simply false," White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said at a press briefing when asked about reported claims of U.S. involvement. A report in the Economic Times newspaper in India on Sunday had cited Hasina as accusing the U.S. of playing a role in ousting her because

it wanted control over Bangladesh's Saint Martin island in the Bay of Bengal. The newspaper said Hasina had conveyed that message to it through her close associates.

Hasina's son, Sajeeb Wazed, in a post on X on Sunday, said she never made any such statement.

"We believe that the Bangladeshi people should determine the future of the Bangladeshi government and that's where we stand," the White House added. An interim government in Bangladesh, led by Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus, was sworn in on Thursday with the aim of holding elections in the Asian nation. Bangladesh was engulfed by demonstrations.

House explosion in Maryland kills 2 and damages nearby homes

Monitoring Desk

BEL AIR: Two people were killed and 12 families displaced after a Maryland house exploded Sunday amid reports of a possible gas leak, fire officials said.

Neighbors described feeling and hearing the early morning blast that damaged a number of surrounding houses in Bel Air, a town about 30 miles (50 kilometers) northeast of Baltimore. Firefighters were called to the area around 6:40 a.m. for a report of a gas leak and an outdoor odor of gas, said Oliver Alkire, a master deputy with the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Alkire said that as firefighters were approaching, they began receiving calls that the house had exploded.



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas outside Moscow, Russia.

US lifts restrictions on Saudi weapons, with eye on resolving Gaza crisis

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: The United States confirmed on Monday it would resume sales of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia, as concerns over human rights in the kingdom's Yemen war give way to US hopes for it to play a role in resolving the conflict in Gaza.

More than three years after imposing limits on human rights grounds over Saudi strikes in Yemen, the State Department said it would return to weapons sales "in regular order, with appropriate congressional notification and consultation." "Saudi Arabia has re-

mained a close strategic partner of the United States, and we look forward to enhancing that partnership," State Department spokesman Vedant Patel told reporters. US President Joe Biden took office in 2021 pledging a new approach to Saudi Arabia that emphasised human rights, and immediately announced that the administration would only send "defensive" weaponry to the longtime US arms customer. The United States is again hoping for support from Arab partners as Iran threatens another reprisal against Israel over the killing in Tehran of Hamas's political leader, Ismail Haniyeh.

Muslim guard rescues girl from knife attacker in London

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: A 29-year-old guard at a nearby store, who gave his name as Abdullah, saved an 11-year-old girl from a knife attack in the British capital on Monday.

Abdullah said he heard a scream and then saw someone "stabbing a kid". "I jumped on him, held the hand in which he was (carrying) a knife, and just put him down on the floor and just held him and took the knife away from him," he said.

"Then a couple of more people joined as well, and we just held him until the police came", he added.

Indonesian president holds first cabinet meeting in future capital

Monitoring Desk

JAKARTA: Indonesian President Joko Widodo on Monday held his first cabinet meeting in the country's future capital, despite much of the city remaining under construction as it runs behind schedule.

The \$32-billion megaproject Nusantara was widely expected to be inaugurated on August 17, Indonesia's Indepen-

dence Day, but building delays and funding woes have cast doubt on the schedule. Widodo, popularly known as Jokowi, still hailed the city-in-progress, which is expected to be fully ready in 2045.

"Not all countries have the opportunity, have the ability to build their capital starting from zero," he said.

Putin tells Abbas of 'great pain' at Palestinian plight

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin told visiting Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas on Tuesday that Moscow was pained by the plight of his people and backed their aspiration to create a fully fledged state.

Putin said Moscow was paying attention to events in the Middle East despite the demands of its own war in Ukraine. He did not refer directly to Ukraine's week-old incursion into western Russia, an operation that has caught Russia's military off guard and forced more than 130,000 people to flee their homes.

"Everyone is well aware that Russia today, unfortunately, must defend its interests and defend its people with arms

in hand. But what is happening in the Middle East, what is happening in Palestine, of course, does not go unnoticed on our part," Putin said, according to a Kremlin transcript.

"And of course, we are watching with great pain and anxiety the humanitarian catastrophe that has unfolded in Palestine," he added.

Putin noted the death toll of almost 40,000 Palestinians in the course of the Gaza war since the Islamist militant group Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing some 1,200 people and taking more than 250 into captivity in Gaza. Item 1 of 3 Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas outside Moscow, Russia.

Kursk attack will pressure Russia and 'restore justice,' Zelenskiy says

Monitoring Desk

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said Ukraine had launched an incursion into Russian territory to "restore justice" and pressure Moscow's forces, in his first acknowledgement of Kyiv's surprise offensive into the western Kursk region.

Moscow's forces on Sunday were in their sixth day of intense battle against Kyiv's largest incursion into Russian territory since the start of the war, which left southwestern parts of Russia vulnerable before reinforcement started arriving.

Russian authorities rushed to evacuate residents and imposed a sweeping security regime in three border regions on Saturday, while Belarus, a staunch ally of Moscow, sent more troops to its border with Ukraine, accusing Kyiv of violating its air space.

address, Zelenskiy said he had discussed the operation with top Ukrainian commander Oleksandr Syrskiy, vowing to respond in kind after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of its neighbour in February 2022.

"Today, I received several reports from Commander-in-Chief Syrskiy regarding the front lines and our actions to push the war onto the aggressor's territory," he said late on Saturday.

"Ukraine is proving that it can indeed restore justice and is ensuring the exact kind of pressure that is needed - pressure on the aggressor."

Russia's defence ministry said on Sunday it had destroyed 14 Ukrainian drones and four Tochka-U tactical ballistic missiles overnight over the Kursk region, and 18 drones over other Russian regions that Ukraine frequently attacks.

In his nightly video





## Pakistan was inevitable

By Prof Dr M Yakub Mughul

The Muslims were a political power in India for more than one thousand years. Muhammad Bin Qasim conquered Sindh in 712 AD

and since then Sindh became the Gateway to Islam in India. Shahabuddin Muhammad Ghauri was the first Muslim warrior who was responsible for the establishment of Muslim rule in India. After the defeat of Pirthvi Raj in the second battle of Tarain in 1192, Sultan Mohammad Ghauri appointed Qutbuddin Aibak as his Viceroy to consolidate his empire. The last Muslim dynasty, which ruled in India was the Mughul dynasty. In 1857, the Muslims lost the War of Independence and last Mughul Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, was deposed and made prisoner, hence, the Muslims became subjects of British India. Thus, Hindus got new masters and the British needed for their support, against the Muslims, who favoured them in every walk of life. For about a century Indians remained under the British rule, who were not only deprived of their majority provinces in all respects but at the same time the Muslims were treated as second grade citizens. At the time of partition of India, Pakistan inherited only 34 Industrial units out of 921. This shows that when Pakistan was established, these areas were extremely backward economically and we had to work very hard to develop the country.



**There is no Power on Earth that can undo Pakistan.**

**M A Jinnah**

After a long struggle, under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Azam, the Muslims got a separate homeland - Pakistan on August 14, 1947. This day has, therefore, a historical importance, the day on which the downtrodden Muslims of the South Asia got a place, where they could live freely and mould their lives according to the principles of Quran and Sunnah. On this day Pakistan emerged not only as the biggest Muslim state of the Islamic world but also as a fifth largest country on the world map. If Pakistan had not been created, the Muslims in India would have remained there as a nameless nation or a religious minority. Pakistan is a great gift of Allah, which came into being on 27th Ramzan-al-Mubarak, Yaum-al-Juma, so that the Muslims should bow before Allah for this great favour of a sovereign state.

The Quaid, on the occasion of Independence Day, in his message to the nation said: "It is with the feelings of the greatest happiness and emotion that I send you my greetings. August 14 is the birthday of the independent and sovereign state of Pakistan. It marks the fulfillment of the destiny of the Muslim nation which made great sacrifices in the past few years to have its homeland." He added: "Today is Jumma-tul-wida, last Friday of the Holy month of Ramazan, a day of rejoicing for all of us wherever we may be in this vast Sub-continent and for the matter of that throughout the world. Let the Muslim congregations in

the Muslims in prevailing conditions in India. He said: "To my mind the new constitution with its idea of a single Indian Federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces re-

formed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslim of north-west India and Bengal be considered as a nation entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are? Personally I think that the Muslims of north-west India and Bengal ought to ignore at present the Muslim minority provinces. This is the best course to adopt in the interests of both Muslim majority and minority provinces." Atlee the Prime Minister of Great Britain announced on February 20, 1947 that transfer of power to responsible Indians not later than June 1948 would take place. It was simultaneously announced that Wavell was being recalled and replaced by the Viscount

Mountbatten. Lord Mountbatten arrived on March 22, 1947 and he was warmly welcomed by Nehru. Lord Ismay had warned his government that this appointment was both a collusive act with Congress and insult to the Muslims. After the decision of the British Government, Mountbatten was trying to become the common Governor-General of India and Pakistan. He desired that after partition he should be the Governor-General of both of the new states.

In mid-May Nehru invited Lord Mountbatten to continue as Governor-General of the new India and he immediately accepted the offer. In a meeting with the Quaid on July 2, 1947 Lord Mountbatten put forward his proposal of a common Governor-General. However, Quaid-i-Azam did not agree with his proposal and informed Mountbatten that as all the Governors of the provinces after the establishment of Pakistan would still be British, as would be commanders of each of three armed services, the Governor-General must be a Pakistani to demonstrate that the country was really independent. Quaid-i-Azam also rejected his idea that Quaid-i-Azam should

be Acting Governor-General. Being aware of the partiality of Mountbatten in favour of the Indian National Congress and his leadership, the Quaid did not want to take any risk. There upon Mountbatten said: "Do you realise what this cost you?" Quaid-i-Azam replied, "I may cost several crores of rupees in the assets." Mountbatten replied, "It may well cost you the whole of your assets and the future of Pakistan." Due to the opposition of Atlee, the Prime Minister of UK, and Lord Mountbatten for the partition of India and the partiality to Congress leadership later, and threat to Mr Jinnah Pakistan was deprived of getting its due share and Kashmir's future was left unsettled so that Pakistan may not consolidate itself. While addressing the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, the Quaid had declared that the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan was the only 'solution' of the problem of India. Any idea of a United India could never have worked and in my judgment, it would have led us to terrific disaster."

The economic factor and the fear of Hindus domination also played a vital role in the struggle for separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent.

The Establishment of Pakistan brought the greatest responsibilities on the shoulders of Quaid-i-Azam, who was not only the first 'Governor-General of Pakistan but also at the same time the Father of Nation. Had to build the newly born State, starting from the scratch.' At the time of independence there

was no administrative machinery to assume the day-to-day official business. Actually Pakistan was born with a number of serious disadvantages. In 1947, it was not only, politically and administratively backward as compared to the rest of India but also economically the poorest part of the British India. Its economy was basically rural based.

The majority of its population lived in the countryside and three-fourth of its GNP was contributed by the agricultural sector. The new country did not have its own currency. Being basically agricultural, the areas that in 1947 were set apart to form the State of Pakistan did not possess the institutional infrastructure to support a modern economy. In view of these handicaps, it was not therefore surprising that few people regarded Pakistan as economically not viable. The Quaid-i-Azam rose as a great Muslim leader in India. He galvanised and united the scattered Indian Muslims on the basis of Muslim nationhood. He categorically announced that there were two nations in India, Muslims and Hindus. He gave Muslims a destination in the form of a separate Muslim State in the Lahore Resolution, adopted by Muslim League on March 23, 1940.

The Quaid worked for the development of the areas comprising of Pakistan. He pressurised the British Government to introduce reforms in these areas. On the other hand he made Muslim League active in every corner of India. Due to his efforts, Muslim League branch was established in Baluchistan in 1939 and people of that area not only became aware of Muslim League but also supported Pakistan demand. Similarly under his leadership, Muslim League had also won all the four

by-elections in 1946 in NWFP, which was under the influence of the Congress. No doubt, it was Quaid's efforts and belief that made not only the British Government but also the Hindu dominated Congress agreed to the partition and establishment of two independent States in India, one for the Muslims and the other for Hindus. It was also due to the competent leadership of Mr Jinnah that Baluchistan, which was under the influence of princely States and Jagirdars, had given its verdict for Pakistan. NWFP too, which was under the Congress rule had voted for Pakistan. Hence, all Muslim majority areas i.e. Bengal, Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and NWFP voted for Pakistan and even Muslim minority areas also voted for Pakistan. This was a great success of Mr Jinnah. No doubt, the establishment of Pakistan is an outcome of the efforts of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. His own qualities, character, knowledge, calibre, courage, way of reasoning, decision making, strength, perseverance, sense of honour and integrity were proved his weapons to crown him with success. The Quaid-i-Azam was an indefatigable political leader. It was due to his honesty and sincere approach that he was able to carve out the sovereign state of Pakistan, despite so many obstacles and impediments in his way.

The Quaid-i-Azam will be remembered in history as one of the few world leaders who combined in themselves many lofty traits such as statesmanship, courage, sense of responsibility, integrity, for-

wardness, and dedication for the cause. He was a great parliamentarian, his logic unassailable. He was unpurchasable and had always the courage to say what he considered was in the interest of the Muslims of the Sub-continent. The problem of refugees and their rehabilitation was the most crucial, one, which faced Pakistan at the time of its creation. Over one million Muslims were killed ruthlessly. Nearly over twelve million Muslims had been forcibly driven from Indian territories into Pakistan. Mass killing of Muslims and mass exodus was maliciously designed to cripple the newly established Muslim State of Pakistan. Quaid-i-Azam met this challenge with courage and determination. He moved his headquarter to Lahore to give his personal attention to the problems of refugees. Quaid-i-Azam Relief fund was created in which rich and wealthy citizens of Pakistan were asked to donate generously for the rehabilitation of the refugees.

Lord Mountbatten wanted to weaken Pakistan. He, therefore, influenced Radcliff to award Muslim majority Tahsils of Pathan Kot and Gurdaspur to India to provide land route to her to send its army to Kashmir. One of the major problems, which the Government of Pakistan had to deal with, was that of finance. After partition the assets were to be distributed between the two countries as per agreed formula. But the Indian Government delayed the payment of Pakistan's share of assets with the intention to create as much disorder as possible and aggravate the economic crises in Pakistan. The finances of the country, however, were so carefully and efficiently managed by the Government of Pakistan under the leader.

The nation will reaffirm its commitment on 76th Independence Day to fully realize the sublime goals, set out by its founding father Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah more than seven decades ago on Pakistan's historic emergence. The founder had envisioned a peaceful, progressive and prosperous state, taking due care of masses, especially the poor, and where all citizens are equal in rights, dignity and self-respect. Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947, under its leaders' philosophy of an independent state for Muslims, commonly known as a two-nation theory. Muslims in the sub-continent were facing untold misery and disgrace at the hands of British rulers and their Hindu partners, coupled with growing so-

## Independence Day:

### A day to commemorate matchless sacrifices of freedom fighters

By Taj Nabi Khan

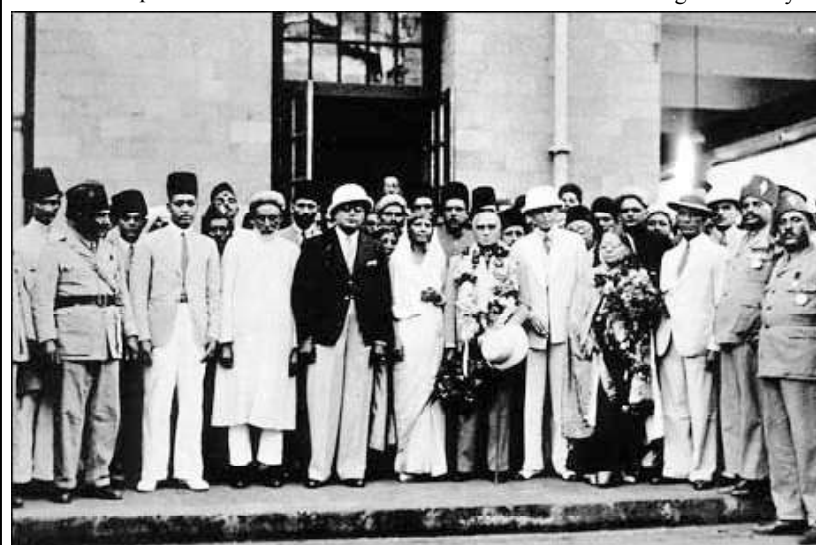
Every year, Independence Day of Pakistan is celebrated across the country and around the globe by Pakistani diasporas and in Pakistani missions abroad with patriotic zeal and zest to commemorate the matchless sacrifices of freedom fighters whose consistent efforts have placed Paki-

in British India.

Thus Pakistan gained independence from the British rule on 14th August, 1947. Independence Day is a public holiday; therefore, the public is free to roam around and celebrate the day. They visit the national monuments and places of national significance recreational spots to mark the holiday.

This is also the time to

cial Sciences, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Dr Shahid Siddiqui while talking to APP said, "14th August is celebrated as Independence Day to remember the achievement and sacrifices of the heroes of Pakistan freedom movement but at the same time we should not forget our responsibilities to sustain it at high esteem among the comity of



stan on map of the world on 14th August 1947.

The day is not only an occasion to promote patriotism and national unity. But it is also the time to create awareness among the new generations about the sacrifices of the heroes of Pakistan Movement who rendered their lives for creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent.

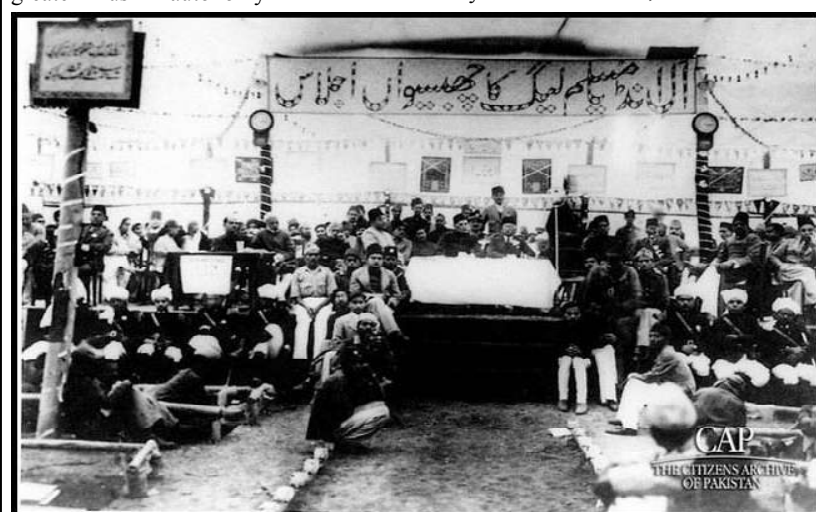
During the partition, more than 14 million people had crossed borders between Pakistan and India while each one of them had an untold story of his own. Therefore, on this day, homage is paid to all those people who had lost their lives during the migration and riots in 1947 as well as the political figures, freedom fighters, poets and artists. There was a growing demand for an independent Muslim state in the subcontinent. Consequently, the All India Muslim League was founded on December 30, 1906 while Allama Muhammad Iqbal presented the idea of a separate Muslim state consisted of geographically Muslim majority areas in the subcontinent in 1930. Afterwards, in 1940, the Pakistan Resolution was passed in Lahore demanding greater Muslim autonomy

meet friends and relatives and exchange gifts with each other to celebrate the day. Pakistan's Independence Day pays homage to the national heroes who devoted their lives for Pakistan's freedom movement.

They had made efforts to materialize the dream of an independent Muslim state. Moreover, events such as special theatre shows, national song competitions, concerts, and Independence Day pageants are held while radio and television stations broadcast national songs.

Talking to APP, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Senator Prof. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani said that independence movement was a long journey of struggle and sacrifices, adding that it was not easy even to imagine a free and sovereign Muslim state in the subcontinent under the British Raj.

She said, "Only those know the real worth of freedom who are aware of the conditions of people living in colonies and occupied territories as slaves and second class citizens." Each citizen is representing Pakistan in one way or the other, therefore, it is a must to bring a positive change at individual level, she added. Dean Faculty of So-



### Pakistan moves towards achieving goals of its creation

The nation will reaffirm its commitment on 76th Independence Day to fully realize the sublime goals, set out by its founding father Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah more than seven decades ago on Pakistan's historic emergence. The founder had envisioned a peaceful, progressive and prosperous state, taking due care of masses, especially the poor, and where all citizens are equal in rights, dignity and self-respect. Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947, under its leaders' philosophy of an independent state for Muslims, commonly known as a two-nation theory. Muslims in the sub-continent were facing untold misery and disgrace at the hands of British rulers and their Hindu partners, coupled with growing so-

cial and economic disparity between the two nations. They were also victims of poverty and economic depravity.

Over the years, the two-nation theory has proven correct because all minorities living in India are still leading miserable life by all means under the dominance of extremist Hindus. "Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs and literary traditions. They neither intermarry, nor eat together, and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions," the Quaid said in his presidential address to All-India Muslim League's Lahore session on March 22, 1940.

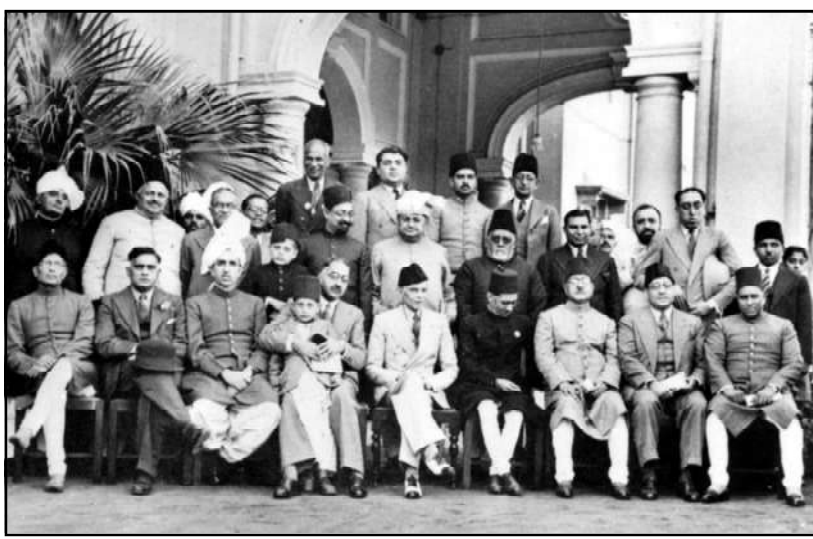
On August 11, 1947, Father of the Nation in his presidential address to the Constituent Assembly of

Pakistan said: "If we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor."

On another occasion during his 'broadcast talk' to the people of Australia on February 19, 1948, he said: "We follow the teachings of Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). We are members of the brotherhood of Islam in which all are equal in rights, dignity and self-respect."

Consequently, we have a special and very deep sense of unity."

The incumbent government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has striven to move forward on the right path, with top leadership pledging to fulfill the task of revamping and reshaping.







ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet Meeting.

**JI Ameer accuses PML-N, PPP of abusing power.**

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Ameer Hafiz Naeem on Tuesday cautioned the government against renegeing on promises made with the JI at the end of the sit-in, adding that his party had started a count-down. The JI Ammer accused the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of abusing power. During a press conference at Karachi, JI emir said that the rulers were enjoying all the privileges while depriving the people of even the basic rights and bombarding them with endless taxes on everything.

**Empowering women imperative for achieving economic growth: Gilani**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Tuesday said that empowering women to take leadership roles in climate action will lead to more innovative and comprehensive solutions, driving progress in environmental conservation and sustainability. "The impacts of rising temperatures, erratic weather patterns, and natural disasters disproportionately affect women and marginalized communities and it is imperative that response to these challenges is inclusive, equitable, and transformative" he expressed these views at a

holders for organizing such a significant and impactful conference on an issue that resonates deeply with our national and regional priorities. The diverse gathering of parliamentarians from Cambodia, Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Iraq, Lao PDR, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam and Turkmenistan is a testament to Pakistan shared commitment to addressing the critical issues of climate change, green economy, gender equality and sustainable development. He also admired dedication to integrating gender

sustainability. He said that women, who make up nearly half of the country's population, have always been key players in managing natural resources and advocating for sustainable practices. He said that transition to a green economy is inevitable and prudent to reduce environmental risks and empowering women within this framework is of paramount importance. Quoting the former Prime Minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, "A society where women are marginalized is a society that cannot reach its full potential", he said.

**Balochistan close to heart of PM and federal govt, measures to be taken to address issues: Ishaq Dar**

*Chief Minister says strong relation of trust can be established between state & general public, reforms being brought for improving governance being top priority of provincial government*

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar has stated that Balochistan is close to the heart of Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and the federal government and as such steps would be taken to resolve the issues being faced by the province and its people. He said that it is necessary that Balochistan gets its genuine rights. He said that economic situation of the country is surely hard but it is not disappointing. He said that the future of Pakistan is bright and this country has come into being for ever. The Deputy Prime Minister was presiding over the meeting about the law

and order situation and development projects in Balochistan here at the Chief Minister secretariat on Tuesday. Also present in the meeting were the Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Muhammad Ayaz Sadiq, Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, Federal Minister for Trade, Jam Kamal Khan, Member National Assembly, Mir Ejaz Jhokrani, provincial ministers and other senior high ups. The Chief Minister shed light on the development projects and law and order situation in the province. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that improvement in

health and education is included in the top priority of the provincial government. He said that reforms are being brought for improvement in governance in different sectors. He said that we think that the strong relation of trust between the state and people can be established. He mentioned that the scholarship programme has been started in 200 higher universities for the Ph.D science students. Besides, the special Scholarship programme is being introduced for the underprivileged segments of the society including minorities and transgenders. The Chief Minister

said that the issues of the province associated with the backwardness can be resolved through equal development. He said that the release of funds happens to be very limited for the development funds approved from the federation. If the proportion of funds remain same then completion of federal funded development projects would not be possible. He insisted that the strong determination and practical steps of the federal government are unavoidable to bring the province at par of other provinces. The Deputy Prime Minister said that the country is facing economic hard-

ships for time being, but we would put the country on path of sustainable development. He also said that comprehensive roadmap is being prepared for the long term planning. He said that all the stakeholders would be taken on board for resolving the issues of Balochistan. He assured every possible cooperation to resolve the issues of province besides its development. Addressing the meeting, the Speaker National Assembly said that the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif would consult the stakeholders for resolution of the issues by paying detailed visit to the province soon.



reception hosted in honor of the delegation of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). The delegation was led by Secretary General of AFPPD Dr. Jeth Sirathranout. He felicitated Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, the Ministry, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, and all the stake-

holders for organizing such a significant and impactful conference on an issue that resonates deeply with our national and regional priorities. The diverse gathering of parliamentarians from Cambodia, Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Iraq, Lao PDR, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam and Turkmenistan is a testament to Pakistan shared commitment to addressing the critical issues of climate change, green economy, gender equality and sustainable development. He also admired dedication to integrating gender

perspectives into environmental and economic policies, which would help build a sustainable and inclusive future for our peoples. "Pakistan, like many of our neighboring countries, faces significant vulnerabilities to climate change", he added. The Chairman observed that empowering women is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic imperative for achieving economic growth and environmental



ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal presenting keynote address during Istehkam-e-Pakistan National Seminar organized by International Islamic University Islamabad at Faisal Mosque Campus

**Pakistan urges boosting of Africa's representation within UNSC to address historical injustice**

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for rectifying historical injustices by enhancing the representation of Africa within the UN Security Council as part of the reform process to make the 15-member body more effective, inclusive and accountable to combat the growing challenges. "We acknowledge the historic injustice against Africa - its occupation, oppression and exploitation - and in the structure of the Security Council of the other international institutions," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the Council. The Pakistani envoy was speaking at a high-level

debate on addressing the historical injustice and enhancing Africa's effective representation on the Security Council, convened by Sierra Leone, the Council President for the month of August. The Security Council is currently composed of five permanent members—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—and 10 non-permanent members elected to serve for two years. Pakistan, he said, agrees that Africa's demand, set out in the "Ezulwini Consensus" for equitable representation of the region of Africa, stressing that it is critically different from the demand of four States—India, Brazil, Germany and

Japan—who are campaigning for permanent membership of the Security Council for "themselves". "The demands of Africa for regional seats are designed to rectify injustice, not to exacerbate injustice," Ambassador Akram said, noting that Council's structure reflects the 1945 power realities. The Pakistani envoy proposed the creation of "special regional seats" to enhance equitable geographical representation, suggesting that these seats could be rotated among member states within the region or even represented by regional organizations like the African Union, the European Union, the Arab League, and the OIC.

**Opposition evolves plan to give tough time to government**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Opposition has evolved a plan to give tough time to government. According to sources opposition held a meeting here to review overall situation of the country. The meeting was attended by Mehmood Khan Achakzai, chairman Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ayeen, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, head of JUI-F, Chairman PTI Gohar

Ali Khan, Asad Qaisar, Umar Ayoub and others. The sources said the recent decision of Supreme Court (SC) was discussed in details in the meeting and the decision was taken to give tough time to government. Sources said PTI leaders heard complaints of Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Mehmood Khan Achakzai advised to take all alongside them.

**Two terrorists killed as search operation starts in Mastung**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Two terrorists were killed during search operation started against the terrorists following terrorist attack at the vehicle of Deputy Commissioner Panjgur in Mastung area on Tuesday. The sources of Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) informed that the search operation was started against terrorists in Mastung.

**Chinese envoy felicitate Pakistani nation on 77th Independence Day**

KARACHI (APP): The Acting Consul General of People's Republic of China Zhang Hao, extending felicitations to Pakistani nation on 77th Independence Day on Tuesday vowed to gear up efforts for strengthening the bonds of friendship and strategic partnership between both the nations. The Chinese envoy, in his message on the auspicious occasion of the 77th Independence Day of Pakistan, conveyed on behalf of the Chinese Consulate General in Karachi, sincerest congratulations to the Pakistani people both at home and abroad. "Throughout these 77 years, Pakistan has demonstrated unwavering determination and diligent efforts, achieving remarkable progress and milestones in its nation-building and development endeavors," he said and added, "Today, Pakistan stands as a pivotal force and a significant contributor to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the region and the global community."

He stated that China-Pakistan friendship has been forged through the test of time and remains steadfast. Following Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's successful visit to China, both nations have reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to a higher standard of quality and to fostering a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in this new era, the CG observed. Expressing eagerness on part of the Consulate General for collaborating closely with Pakistani counterparts, he vowed for redoubling their efforts to strengthen the bonds of friendship and the all-weather strategic partnership that exists between the two nations. Zhang Hao prayed that the people of Pakistan continue to enjoy peace and prosperity and the enduring friendship between China and Pakistan flourish and prosper for generations to come.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information Ms. Ambreen Jan accompanied by the participants of the Painting Competition and Exhibition cutting cake to commemorate 77th Independence Day of Pakistan organized by Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications.

**Governor GB, ambassadors term FDI essential for promoting tourism in GB**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Gilgit-Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah, foreign ambassadors and business leaders declared Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as essential for the promotion of tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan and also to explore the new potential of indigenous culture of Pakistan. On this occasion, they said that Gilgit-Baltistan is the Jewels of Pakistan, where there is full potential of all major forms of tourism including traditional, agricultural, medical and cultural tourism, which can attract the foreign tourists with its unique indigenous culture and real heritage of Pakistan. Meanwhile addressing the Pre-Tourism summit session and luncheon hosted, by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Governor Gilgit-Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah said that the promotion of tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan is the top priority of the provincial government and Islam Chamber of Commerce and Industry has taken an pivotal step in the Gilgit-Baltistan region by organizing the Tourism Summit. Governor GB said that Islamabad Chamber of

Commerce President Ahsan Bakhtawari is a young and dynamic business leader whose efforts for this region of GB will always be remembered. He said that last year a direct flight started from Dubai to Pakistan, which should now also start from China, Iran, Azerbaijan and Central Asian states. Meanwhile, while speaking on the occasion, the European Union Ambassador, Dr Riina Kionka said that the European Union is committed to start many projects for the promotion of tourism and energy projects in GB. The Ambassador said that Gilgit-Baltistan is one of the most famous regions of Pakistan for tourism, which has its own indigenous culture, which can create a soft image of Pakistan in front of the world. She said that by increasing tourism facilities in Gilgit-Baltistan, this region can be made a center of international tourism. Meanwhile, the ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, Ihab Abdel Hamid Hasan praised the steps taken by Islam Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the promotion of tourism in Pakistan and said that Gilgit-Baltistan is one of the most beautiful regions of the world.

**AJK PM greets Pakistani Nation on 77th Independence Day**

MIRPUR-AJK (APP): Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on Tuesday extended warm felicitations to the Pakistani nation on the 77th founding anniversary of Pakistan. In a statement, the AJK premier praised the wise and selfless leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who played a crucial role in the establishment of Pakistan on August 14, 1947. He termed the day as a historic milestone in the struggle for a separate homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent. The AJK premier also lauded the indomitable role of Quaid-e-Azam in uniting Muslims under the banner of Muslim League which ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan despite fierce opposition. He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support to Kashmiris in their struggle for self-determination and expressed hope that the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir would soon achieve their goal of freedom. The AJK PM also announced that Kashmiris on both sides of the LoC would celebrate Pakistan's Independence Day with joy and observe India's Independence Day as a black day.

**CM visits Olympian Arshad's house in Mian Channu, presents Rs 100m cheque**

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited Olympian Arshad Nadeem's house in a neighbouring village of Mian Channu on Tuesday, and presented a cheque worth Rs 100 million and a key of Honda Civic car registered with special number 'PAK 92.97'. He CM also gave a cheque worth Rs 5 million to his coach Salman Iqbal Butt, and congratulated his coach and teacher, said a handout issued here. CM Maryam Nawaz hugged and congratulated Arshad Nadeem's mother

Razia Parveen on reaching his house. She was warmly welcomed by Olympian Arshad Nadeem and his family on her arrival in their village 101-15L. The CM made Arshad Nadeem's mother sit with her and talked to her for a long. She went inside the house and met Arshad Nadeem's family and congratulated them on his remarkable victory in the Olympics. She also took photos and selfies with his family. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said Arshad Nadeem has brought unpre-

cedented happiness to the nation. Olympian Arshad Nadeem and his parents termed the arrival of the Chief Minister to their house a great honour. Olympian Arshad Nadeem reminisced about his Olympics memories and shared his efforts with the Chief Minister. Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Sports Minister Faisal Ayub Khokhar, Special Assistant Zeeshan Malik, MPA Sania Ashiq, Amir Hayat Haraj and Pir Aslam Bodla accompanied Madam Chief Minister.



ISLAMABAD: An illuminated view of Prime Minister Secretariat building decorated with colorful lights for celebrate Independence Day 14th August, in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Vendor displaying national flags and other items to attract the customer's in preparation of Independence Day celebration of Pakistan.

**Islamabad Police devise foolproof security plan for Independence Day celebrations**

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, in preparation for the upcoming Independence Day celebrations, the Islamabad Police has rolled out a comprehensive security and traffic plan to ensure the safety and convenience of citizens. He said that, a special security arrangement involving over 3000 police officers has been put in place to maintain peace and tranquility during the Independence Day in the federal capital. Additionally, traffic police officials will diligently manage the flow of vehicular movement to guarantee the smooth passage of traffic in Islamabad. DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza expressed the commitment of the Islamabad Police to ensuring the highest standards of

safety and order during this important national occasion. Senior officers will be actively present in the field, overseeing law enforcement and traffic management operations, he added. In order to prevent any disturbances to the celebrations, special checkpoints will be established, and heightened security will be maintained in key areas. As part of the proactive security measures, specialized units including the CTD, Dolphin force will be conducting mobile patrols to ensure the safety of citizens and visitors. Additionally, special teams have been deployed to patrol parks and public spaces to create a secure environment for families. DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza said that, the Islamabad Police is unwavering in its commitment to curbing lawlessness and criminal activities.